Penn Valley Union Elementary School District



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Welcome Message from the Superintendent

Welcome to Penn Valley Union Elementary School District, where strong schools are built through meaningful partnerships with our families, volunteers, and community. Our district has a long-standing tradition of neighbors helping neighbors, and the time, talents, and dedication of our volunteers play an essential role in enriching the educational experience for every student.

At PVUESD, we believe that every student deserves to feel supported, inspired, and connected. Volunteers help bring that vision to life each day by assisting in classrooms, supporting school events, chaperoning field trips, sharing special skills, and lending a helping hand wherever it is needed. Whether your contribution is an hour a month or several days each week, your presence makes a lasting difference in the lives of our students and strengthens our school community.

We are grateful for the partnerships we share with our Parent Teacher Organizations, community organizations, local businesses, and families, all of whom help create opportunities that extend learning beyond the classroom. Together, we foster safe, welcoming schools where students are encouraged to grow academically, socially, and emotionally while developing the skills and confidence they need for the future.
Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Penn Valley Union Elementary School District. Your willingness to serve reflects the very best of our community and demonstrates the power of working together on behalf of our children. We are honored to welcome you as a valued member of the PVUESD team and look forward to the positive impact we will make together throughout the school year.

Sincerely,
Yuri Calderon

About PVUESD

Penn Valley Union Elementary School District (PVUESD) serves students from Transitional Kindergarten through eighth grade at Williams Ranch Elementary and Ready Springs School, as well as students in TK–12 through Vantage Point Charter School. Nestled in the beautiful Sierra Nevada foothills, our district is proud of its strong rural heritage, close-knit community, and commitment to providing every student with a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment.

At PVUESD, we believe that education is strengthened through meaningful partnerships with families, volunteers, staff, and the community. Under the leadership of Superintendent Yuri Calderon, our district is guided by the vision of Roots • River • Horizons—honoring the traditions and relationships that define our community, working together to navigate the journey of learning and growth, and preparing every student for a future filled with opportunity.

Our volunteers are an important part of that vision. By sharing your time, talents, and care, you help create enriching experiences that inspire students, strengthen our schools, and reinforce the sense of community that makes Penn Valley a special place to learn and grow. Together, we are helping every student build strong roots, navigate their own unique journey, and reach limitless horizons.

Purpose of the Volunteer Program

Our volunteer program aims to engage our parents and caregivers in meaningful opportunities to support PVUESD and its staff and students. Volunteers will work with teachers and staff to enhance the learning experience and provide support to benefit all students. By building and sustaining a robust volunteer program, we hope to foster strong school communities, encouraging family engagement and a shared investment in student success.

The intent of this handbook is to provide clear guidance regarding responsibilities, requirements, and expectations for volunteers. Additional information regarding volunteer assistance is contained in Board Policy (BP) 1240 and Administrative Regulation (AR) 1240 and California State Assembly Bill 506.

Volunteers are expected to follow all state and district policies and regulations

Volunteer Opportunities

Our volunteer program offers a multitude of opportunities to become more involved in your student's education, fostering better communication and stronger relationships between home and school. The opportunities include Library support, school events, classroom support, extracurricular activity support, field trip chaperones, and drivers for field trips and athletic events.



Definition of "Volunteer"

VISITOR vs VOLUNTEER

Review the categories below to determine which applies to you.

VISITOR

Visitor/Participant: No Clearance Requirements

- Attends a musical, drama, athletic, art, or academic event or assembly as a member of the audience
- Attends a PTA or Education Foundation Affiliate Meeting
- Attends school events at which parents are expected to supervise their own children
  (examples: Family Movie Night, Open House)
- Visits the school office for business
- Attends a parent-staff conference
- Attends an IEP or 504 meeting
- Guest speaker for a presentation to students

VOLUNTEER

Tier 1: Classroom Volunteer

- Has direct contact with students under the supervision of district staff
- Assists in the classroom or other school activities
- Lunch Duty volunteers
- Field trip chaperones (day trip)

Tier 2: One-on-one student support, driving students, and overnight field trips.

- Has direct one-on-one contact with students under the supervision of district staff
- Field trip chaperones (overnight)
- Field Trip Drivers/Athletic Team Drivers
- Please reference AR 3541.1 for more detailed information about transporting students

Mandated Reporting

Protecting the Safety and Well-Being of Students

Penn Valley Union Elementary School District is committed to providing a safe, secure, and supportive learning environment for every student. To help ensure the safety of our students, **all Level 1 and Level 2 volunteers are required to successfully complete the District-approved California Mandated Reporter Training before they may begin volunteering.** Proof of completion must be submitted as part of the volunteer clearance process.

The purpose of this training is to help volunteers recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect, understand their responsibilities, and know how to respond appropriately if concerns arise while volunteering in our schools.

While volunteering, you may observe behaviors or situations that raise concerns about a student's safety or well-being. If you have a reasonable suspicion that a child may be the victim of abuse or neglect, you should:

- **Immediately notify the site principal or another school administrator.**
- **Provide only factual information about what you observed or what the student disclosed.**
- **Complete an online report through the California Mandated Reporter reporting system as instructed during your required training.**

Volunteers should **not**:

- Investigate or attempt to determine whether abuse or neglect has occurred.
- Interview or repeatedly question a student.
- Promise to keep a student's disclosure a secret.
- Contact the student's parent, guardian, or the suspected individual regarding the concern.
- Discuss the situation with other volunteers, parents, or community members.

All concerns regarding a student's safety should be handled promptly, professionally, and with the utmost confidentiality.

Volunteer clearance will not be granted until all required training has been completed and all required documentation has been received and approved by the District.

> **Remember:** Every volunteer plays an important role in helping maintain a safe learning environment. If you see or hear something that raises concern about a student's safety or well-being, report it immediately to the site principal or another school administrator. Prompt reporting allows trained school personnel to respond appropriately and provide students with the protection and support they may need.

Links:

Mandated Reporter Training:
https://www.publicschoolworks.com/Portal/Portal.php?di=10878&dia=2s0hr
How-To Video:
https://vimeo.com/reviews/c541eb57-a2d2-48cd-a633-81c00ac1aeac/videos/1099789006

Confidentiality

Respecting Student Privacy and Confidentiality

As a PVUESD volunteer, you may become aware of confidential information regarding students, families, employees, or district operations. Volunteers are expected to maintain the highest level of confidentiality and professionalism at all times.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Student academic performance, grades, and records
- Student behavior or disciplinary matters
- Medical, health, or disability information
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans
- Family circumstances or personal information
- Employee information or personnel matters

Volunteers **must not** discuss, disclose, or share confidential information with anyone outside of authorized school personnel, including friends, neighbors, family members, or on social media.

If a parent or community member asks questions about another student, employee, or school matter, politely refer them to the classroom teacher or school administrator.

Volunteers should also:

- Respect the privacy of all students and families.
- Avoid discussing confidential matters in hallways, parking lots, or public places.
- Refrain from taking photographs, videos, or audio recordings of students other than their own child unless specifically authorized by school staff and appropriate parent permissions are on file.
- Never access or request confidential student records unless specifically authorized by district staff.

Any suspected breach of confidentiality should be reported to the school principal immediately. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in the suspension or revocation of volunteer privileges.

Remember: Student privacy is protected by federal and state law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Maintaining confidentiality is an essential responsibility of every PVUESD volunteer.

Confidentiality Acknowledgment

I understand that, as a volunteer with Penn Valley Union Elementary School District, I may have access to confidential information regarding students, families, staff, and district operations. I agree to maintain the confidentiality of all such information, comply with district policies regarding student privacy, and understand that failure to do so may result in the immediate revocation of my volunteer privileges. I further understand that student educational records are protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and may not be disclosed without proper authorization.

Expectations of Volunteers

Volunteer Expectations

PVUESD volunteers are valued members of our school community and play an important role in supporting student success. An ideal volunteer:

- Is reliable, flexible, respectful, and committed to supporting students and staff
- Maintains a positive, professional attitude and serves as a positive role model
- Works cooperatively with school staff and follows direction, procedures, and safety expectations
- Demonstrates good judgment, integrity, patience, and respect when working with students
- Maintains confidentiality regarding students, families, staff, and school operations
- Builds positive relationships while helping create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment
- Completes all required volunteer clearance requirements and maintains approved volunteer status

Volunteer Responsibilities

- As a volunteer, you are expected to:
- Sign in and out at the school office each time you volunteer
- Wear your volunteer identification badge while on campus
- Follow all district policies, procedures, and staff directions
- Communicate questions or concerns to the appropriate staff member
- Dress appropriately for the activity and remember that you represent PVUESD
- Respect student privacy and confidentiality at all times
- Refrain from photographing, recording, or sharing information about students unless specifically authorized by the District and appropriate permissions are in place

Volunteers May Not:

- Act as a substitute for a teacher, staff member, or other District employee
- Provide instruction, supervision, or support outside of assigned duties or without staff direction
- Discipline students or administer consequences
- Access confidential student records or information unless specifically authorized
- Discuss students, families, staff, or school matters outside of appropriate school channels
- Post or share student information, photographs, or school-related observations on social media without District authorization
- Transport students unless approved as a Level 2 volunteer driver and all transportation requirements have been met
- Be responsible for supervising students independently unless specifically authorized by District staff
- Engage in any behavior that compromises student safety, privacy, or the professional standards of PVUESD

Volunteer service is a privilege. Failure to follow these expectations may result in suspension or revocation of volunteer privileges.

Volunteer Clearance Levels and Requirements

➤ LEVEL 1

General School Volunteer, Day Field Trip Chaperone (no driving)

Level 1 volunteers include volunteers in the classroom or other on-campus support and day field trip chaperones who are directly supervised at all times by staff.

Requirements include:

- Completion of the Volunteer Online Application
- Completion of Mandated Reporter training
- Must not be prohibited from volunteering in a school setting due to a criminal conviction, including being required to register as a sex offender under California law.
- TB Clearance Verification

This level of clearance will allow you to act as a volunteer in classrooms, support campus activities, and chaperone day field trips (as a non-driver).

➤ LEVEL 2

General School Volunteer, Day and Overnight Field Trip Chaperone and/or Driver

Enhanced Volunteer Clearance (Includes Overnight Field Trips and Optional Student Transportation)

Level 2 volunteers have successfully completed all District volunteer clearance requirements, including a criminal background clearance through the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) via Live Scan fingerprinting. This enhanced level of clearance allows volunteers to:

- *Volunteer on campus in approved activities under the direction of District staff.*
- *Chaperone both day and overnight field trips.*
- *Participate in District-approved volunteer activities requiring Level 2 clearance.*
- *Transport students in a private vehicle only after meeting all additional District driver requirements and receiving approval as a volunteer driver.*

Volunteer Driver Authorization

Level 2 volunteers who wish to transport students must also:

- *Be at least 21 years of age.*
- *Possess a valid California driver's license.*
- *Provide proof of the required automobile liability insurance.*
- *Submit a current California DMV driving record.*
- *Meet all District transportation requirements in accordance with Administrative Regulation 3541.1 – Transportation.*

Working with Students

Level 2 clearance does not authorize a volunteer to independently supervise students or assume the responsibilities of a District employee. Volunteers shall work under the direction of District staff at all times.

Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance Verification

California Education Code (EC) 49406

Tuberculosis Assessment/Examination: A volunteer in a school shall also be required to have on file with the school a certificate showing that, upon initial volunteer assignment, the person submitted to a tuberculosis risk assessment and, if tuberculosis risk factors were identified, was examined and found to be free of infectious tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a contagious disease that can be transmitted through the air, and it is important that we take all necessary precautions to prevent its spread. People can have and spread TB without knowing it. As part of our commitment to the safety and well-being of our students and staff, the California Education Code requires ALL volunteers to provide documentation of TB clearance every 4 years.

Submit **ONE of the following forms of TB clearance documentation** from a healthcare provider:

- TB risk assessment certificate of completion. Contact Nurse Rachel Savalin at rsavalin@pvuesd.org or call the school office.
- Negative TB Skin test result*
- Statement from a healthcare provider that you are free of active TB infection

✅ ***Documentation needs to be from a licensed healthcare provider within the last three years and must include the date, volunteer's name, volunteer's date of birth, and the healthcare provider's contact information.***

Livescan Fingerprinting

In alignment with California State Assembly Bill 506, effective July 1, 2025, all volunteers are required to be fingerprinted and cleared by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and FBI in order to be cleared to volunteer.

Once a volunteer has been fingerprinted via Livescan, they will not need to be fingerprinted again in future school years.

Livescan results and information are specific to an organization. Therefore, you will need to complete Livescan fingerprinting to be cleared to volunteer, even if you have been fingerprinted previously for other organizations.

When submitting your Livescan fingerprints, be aware that Human Resources has full visibility to any history of arrest for a felony or misdemeanor, regardless of conviction outcome. If you have ever been arrested, you may be contacted by Human Resources to provide additional information. Sometimes this could delay or prevent a volunteer's clearance.

All applicants must first complete the Volunteer Clearance Application. After completing the application, volunteers will receive follow-up instructions on how to complete fingerprinting, including the Livescan registration form.

All applicants and volunteers will be responsible for covering the full cost of their Livescan fingerprinting through a service provider of their choice.

Since rolling fees vary by provider, we recommend contacting your preferred Livescan location for specific pricing.

Driver Transportation Form & Proof of Auto Insurance

Driving on field trips or to/from extracurricular activities such as athletics and field trips:
To drive on field trips or transport students to/from extracurricular activities such as athletics and band competitions, a volunteer must **select Level 2** when applying to volunteer.
Volunteers transporting students in their own cars should be aware that their personal automobile insurance has sole responsibility in the case of any accident. School/district insurance does not cover the use of private vehicles; therefore, volunteer drivers must have adequate insurance before transporting any student.
Level 2 volunteers must complete the online application and provide their **driver's license** and **auto insurance coverage Declaration Page** to be cleared to transport students in a private vehicle.
Minimum liability insurance requirements:

- Bodily injury
- A minimum of $100,000/$300,000
- Property damage at least $25,000

Please note: Insurance policies often expire during the school year. Level 2 volunteers should be prepared to submit updated insurance policy documentation upon expiration of the policy currently on file at the school site.

Completing the Volunteer Clearance Application

[Volunteer Application Link]

WHAT YOU NEED TO APPLY:

- Completed online Application.
- Tuberculosis (TB) Clearance Documentation (all volunteer levels).
- Mandated Reporter Training.
- Not be listed on California's Megan's Law Sex Offender Registry.
- Driver Transportation Form (Level 2 volunteers only).
- Auto Insurance Coverage Declaration Page (Level 2 volunteers only).

All volunteers must complete the application process, including Mandated Reporter Training, and receive notification of clearance before they can begin volunteering.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- The information a volunteer enters on the application must match their government-issued identification card, including their full legal name.
- A volunteer must provide a valid email address in order to be notified of the status of their application and for future communication.
- All information collected on the application will remain confidential and will not be shared outside the volunteer program.
- The volunteer clearance application may only be submitted one time per volunteer per year.
- Volunteers should select their clearance level — Level 1 or Level 2 — based on their anticipated volunteer activities.
- To change your volunteer clearance level or help with questions, email Cathy Ruscica at cruscica@pvuesd.org.